Message

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Administrator,

I'd like to thank Bob Kavlock again for his leadership and wish him well in his retirement. I look forward to transitioning into my role as Acting AA for ORD and continuing to move the science forward to support the Agency's mission.

Hot issues

Senate Staff Briefing on PFAS

On November 1, ORD participated in a PFAS 101 briefing for staff from the Senate Appropriations Committee. During the briefing, Bruce Rodan provided an overview of what PFAS are and how they are used, and described EPA's current PFAS activities. Representatives from OW, OLEM, OCFO and OCIR also attended. The briefing was very well received.

NC DEQ releases EPA PFAS analysis

On October 30, North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NC DEQ) released a ORD-led EPA report on PFAS laboratory analysis of samples collected from wastewater inside the Chemours facility in Fayetteville, N.C. This is the sixth ORD report in a series intended to support NC DEQ's decisions surrounding the industrial discharge of PFAS into the Cape Fear River. The report showed that wastewater collected inside the facility had detectable concentrations of five fluorinated compounds, including GenX. In addition to releasing the report, NC DEQ also released the statement, *DEQ takes action to stop additional Chemours discharge based on EPA report*. In the statement, NC DEQ announced that Chemours has agreed to capture additional industrial wastewater with fluorinated compounds, rather than releasing it into the Cape Fear River. NC DEQ Secretary, Michael Regan, states that this step is intended to protect drinking water and is part of NC DEQ's "…ongoing work to stop possible contaminants at their source."

Water Sample Analysis from Parkersburg, WV Warehouse Fire.

The Greater Cincinnati Water Works (GCWW) asked ORD to conduct a confirmatory analysis of water samples collected in Parkersburg, WV following the warehouse fire that started on October 21. The GCWW is analyzing water samples in anticipation of contaminants being introduced into the Ohio River. The warehouse stored plastics and other materials and high volumes of water and fire-fighting foams were used to fight the fire. ORD ran metals analysis on water samples taken from the fire-fighting run-off water. ORD's water analysis results were shared with GCWW to help them interpret their results. The results were also shared with Region 3. GCWW is coordinating with multiple organizations including the Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission.

Missoula City-County Health Department Support

ORD, OAR and Region 8 will provide scientific and technical expertise to the Missoula City-County Health Department in Missoula, MT. They will share expertise on the potential health implications of sub-chronic exposures as well as sub-daily exposures (i.e., 1-3 hours) to PM2.5 from wildfire smoke to ensure the proper health messaging is being provided to Missoula County residents in response to wildfire smoke.

Upcoming public events

Remediation Field Studies at Chem-Dyne Superfund Site

Next week, at the request of Region 5, ORD will assist in field studies to determine groundwater flow directions and rates in support of an evaluation of the ongoing monitored natural attenuation pilot remedy for groundwater at the Chem-Dyne site in Hamilton, OH. ORD research is providing technical assistance to Region 5 and the Ohio EPA to investigate the impact of this remedial measure on groundwater flow and contaminant transport. The Chem-Dyne site is a former waste transfer, storage, and disposal facility with groundwater and soil contamination, including arsenic, asbestos, benzene, and polychlorinated biphenyls.

Vehicle Decontamination and Waste Management Stakeholder Discussion

Wide-area contamination incidents caused by terrorism, industrial accidents or natural disasters can result in thousands of contaminated vehicles that must be managed. On November 13, 2017, ORD researchers are hosting a one-day workshop on vehicle decontamination and waste management. The objective of the workshop is to comingle officials from federal, state, and local governments, experts from the automotive, waste management, and insurance industries, as well as researchers, to discuss decontamination and disposal of vehicles following a wide-area disaster. These discussions will help inform operational and research gaps, identify areas of potential collaboration, and emphasize state and local needs in response to a wide-area incident. Current workshop topics include decontamination research featuring presentations by EPA, USDA, DoD, and Argonne National Lab. The workshop will also feature operational considerations from states, locals and industry perspective presented by NYC Office of Emergency Management, American Insurance Association, and Automotive Recyclers Association.

Water Research Webinar on the National Stormwater Calculator

On November 15 from 2-3 pm ORD will present the National Stormwater Calculator (SWC), to introduce new features. The SWC, in addition to being a desktop application is now available as a mobile web application that can be used on mobile devices, such as smartphones and tablets, and is compatible with all operating systems with an internet connection. A cost estimation module that allows planners and managers to evaluate green infrastructure practices based on comparison of regional and national project planning level cost estimates and predicted performance has also been added.

Last week Highlights

TSCA Implementations: Alternative Testing Methods

On November 2 ORD staff participated in an "Informational Gathering Session on Alternative Testing Methods", to develop the strategic plan to reduce, refine or replace animal testing under the amended TSCA (Lautenberg Act). ORD is working to support the Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention (OCSPP) to develop the strategic plan to fulfill one of the requirements of the new TSCA legislation.

EPA Research Scoping Meeting, Fort Campbell, KY, November 1-2

ORD initiated discussions on possible collaborations between EPA and Department of Defense representatives at Fort Campbell to develop and enhance sustainability projects on the base as part of the NetZero program.

ORD Supports R10 Efforts to Address Closed Oyster Areas

Large portions of the economically important Tillamook Bay in Northwest Oregon are frequently closed to oyster aquaculture because of high levels of fecal bacteria that can cause gastrointestinal illnesses. On November 1, ORD will present findings of Tillamook Bay studies to EPA Region10 water quality staff based in Portland, OR, and Seattle, WA, to help them understand spatial and temporal trends in fecal pollution levels in this watershed.

Transform Toxicity Testing Challenge

In January 2016, EPA launched the Transform Toxicity Testing Challenge – Innovating for Metabolism along with their partners, the National Toxicology Program headquartered at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and the NIH National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences. The purpose of the challenge is incorporate metabolic competence into in vitro high-throughput screening (HTS) assays. The challenge asked for innovative ideas for developing techniques to retrofit existing assays to incorporate processes that reflect how chemicals are broken down

and metabolized by the body. After selecting semi-finalists in May 2017, the EPA and its partners have selected the Transform Toxicity Challenge Stage Two winners. Stage two winners have produced practical designs that bring us one step closer to turning existing, commonly used in vitro HTS assays into tests which will evaluate both parent chemical and metabolite effects. More information is available here.

EPA Launches Air Quality Study in Kansas City Neighborhoods

ORD and Region 7 recently launched the Kansas City Transportation and Local-Scale Air Quality Study (KC-TRAQS) to investigate local community air quality in three neighborhoods in Kansas City, KS, that have multiple air pollution sources from highways, railways, and industry. The study, an FY 2016 RESES project that was also funded through RARE, will be conducted for one year and provide comprehensive air quality monitoring using three different air measurement approaches. In addition to RESES and RARE support, ORD is supporting the project by providing scientific expertise and multiple stationary and mobile monitoring technologies. They have also provided an AirMapper, developed by ORD researchers, for a citizen science project and educational outreach for residents and students.

Water Research Webinar Attracts Close to 700 People

On October 25, 678 people attended the ORD webinar on the Integrated Decision Support Tool (i-DST) for life cycle cost assessment of grey and green stormwater management Infrastructure that is in development under a National Priorities grant. The Colorado School of Mines highlighted their EPA grant work on the development of the i-DST, which can be used to optimize stormwater infrastructure based on user-defined institutional barriers, and economic, environmental, and societal objectives.

Innovative Research Leads to Provisional Patent Application

A major advance in current technology enables observers to visualize how airway cells change in real time in response to an environmental agent, such as ozone. ORD has applied for a provisional patent on the "Controlled Atmosphere Chamber for Live-time Imaging of Cells," which is a chamber that permits real-time microscopic imaging of live cells at high magnification.